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Vancouver metro

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THE STRAWS THAT BROKE A TOWN'S BACK

Tofino businesses ban drinking straws to cut down on plastic waste **metroNEWS**

Leaving sisters stranded 'totally unacceptable'

BUS TRIP

Investigation into why girls, 12 and 16, were left on side of road at night

Reports of two young sisters being stranded midway through a bus trip at a remote Interior depot in the middle of the night is "completely and totally unacceptable," says British Columbia's transport minister.

Todd Stone said the provincial government has launched an investigation after a media outlet reported that the siblings, aged 12 and 16, were left for hours in Valemount after being told their bus tickets had expired two days earlier.

"As someone with three young daughters of my own I just cannot imagine finding out that my children were potentially left on the side of the road in the middle of the night because of a ticket not being valid," Stone said.

"We're going to get to the bottom of this and make sure whatever action needs to be taken will be taken."

The provincial probe will involve accessing Greyhound's internal investigation into the incident, Stone added.

Greyhound spokeswoman Lanesha Gipson said in an email the bus company is treating the matter very seriously and that customer safety is the business's cornerstone.

The girls had been allowed to travel from Prince George to Valemount, located about 80 kilometres West of the Alberta border, but the connecting bus was full and had no room to take them, Gipson said.

"The driver still wanted to assist these customers, and called the central dispatch office to find out if there were any seats available for the customers to travel on the next schedule."

Company employees at the 24-hour facility were aware of the situation and kept an eye on the girls until their father eventually picked them up, she said.

"The staff had constant communication with the customers, and were always monitored as to ensure they remained safe."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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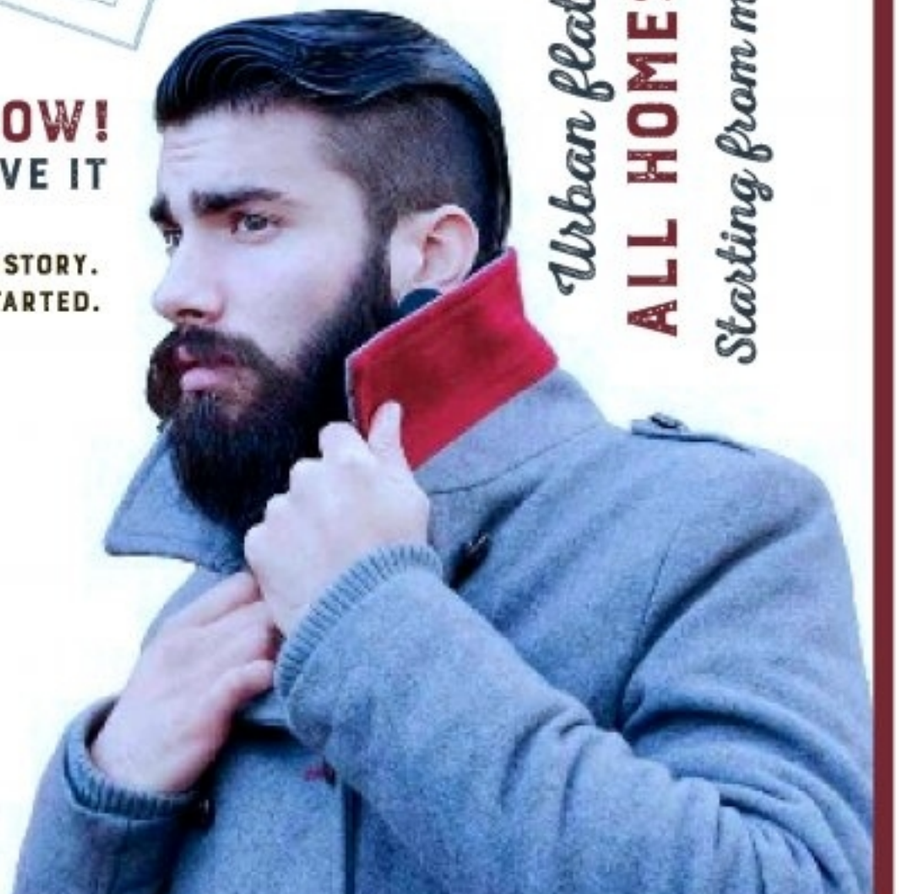

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

British PM David Cameron says he did profit from his father's offshore fund. **World**

Vancouverites clash over Airbnb

HOUSING MARKET

Coun. Meggs says issue has garnered much frustration

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

Tensions are running high between Airbnb fans and naysayers after the City of Vancouver kicked off an investigation into how the popular website and other short-term rental services affect the city's rental housing stock.

The day after councillors instructed staff to look into potential regulations to ensure Airbnb doesn't fill rental housing with tourists instead of tenants, Coun. Geoff Meggs said he's received more lengthy, carefully documented emails and letters about Airbnb than any topic in a long while.

"It has struck a real vein with a lot of people," Meggs said Thursday. "It is an emotional issue.... There have obviously been a lot of very frustrated residents both in multi-family condo buildings and in rentals who have been putting up with a lot of local disruption."

Many are asking Meggs why the city doesn't crack down on its existing bylaw that prohibits rentals shorter than 30 days without a business licence. But he said there have been "surprisingly few" complaints about Airbnb and bylaw enforcement is complaint-based.

"It seems on the face of it that it should be dead easy to email everybody to say we're shutting you down, but to actually do it is a different matter," Meggs said, noting a listing isn't proof of wrongdoing. "This isn't as black and white as running a stop sign."

The city's goal is to find a transparent and straightforward way to enforce short-term rental rules in a way that doesn't take away units from long-term tenants but recognizes many people use the service to make extra cash in an expensive city.

"We don't want to create some sort of enormous bureaucracy," Meggs said. He is confident staff will continue to hear from people who use Airbnb to help form policy, even though it does put hosts in a tough position because it's not legal.

Meanwhile, people against Airbnb took to social media to lambaste the only Airbnb host who spoke publicly about the service at council on Wednesday. People accused Emily Plommer — a tenant who rents out the basement suite and a guest room in her duplex with her landlord's consent — of lying for not revealing she and her partner also use Airbnb to rent the condo they own.

But Plommer simply didn't think it was relevant since they only rent the studio to long-term tenants using standard B.C. leases. They borrowed cash from relatives to get in the property market — "it was literally the cheapest condo on the market" — and prefer using Airbnb to find long-term tenants because it provides more assurance than Craigslist, Plommer said.

"Of course everybody is leaping on me because I'm the only one that's talking about it," she said, adding she received hateful emails since speaking publicly. "We're not racketeers or whatever people are claiming us to be."

She hopes the city will listen to her story and that of other young people who use Airbnb as a way to make money in order to stay in the city as they start families.

STUDY

Home costs place food security at risk

Double-digit leaps in home prices across the Vancouver region could force farmers off the land and threaten local food security, a report from Vancity credit union suggests.

Farmland prices, including in the rich and productive soils of the Fraser River delta, now range from $150,000 to $350,000 per acre for parcels less than five acres, the study said.

Statistics from agricultural lender Farm Credit Canada show land prices above $80,000 per acre can make farming unsustainable.

"The prices are, at the very core, threatening the viability of farming," said report author Brent Mansfield, director of the BC Food Systems Network.

"The cost of farmland, and being able to access that, whether that is for a new farmer with limited access to capital or a farmer who wants to expand their business ... is actually beyond the farm income potential," he said.

The report said non-farmers control large tracts of actively farmed land within the Agricultural Land Reserve and lease it to farmers.

As much as 35 per cent of that land is owned by businesses, many described as holding companies with terms such as holding, investment, estate, property, land or development in their name, Mansfield said.

That raises concerns that it is being purchased on speculation for future estate homes, development or other non-agricultural use, Mansfield said.

"A robust local food system requires protecting agricultural land and ensuring it's actively farmed. Speculation and other pressures need to be addressed."

The public must call on governments to ensure current policies protecting the Agricultural Land Reserve are being implemented and new policies are being put into place, he said.

Options include tightening loopholes that allow land owners to receive farm-class status and lower tax rates while producing only a small amount of food, or strengthening bylaws related to the size of houses on agricultural land.

$80,000

Statistics show land prices above $80,000 per acre can make farming unsustainable.

Vancity's report comes as a Royal LePage survey revealed the year-over-year price for a home in Greater Vancouver vaulted more than 20 per cent in the first three months of 2016.

The Royal LePage study showed strong growth extended eastward into Langley in the first quarter of 2016 as prospective buyers turned to comparatively lower priced real estate compared to other regions in Greater Vancouver.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Celebration of Light fireworks festival lights up English Bay. CONTRIBUTED

Celebration of Light countries announced

Tereza Verenca
For Metro | Vancouver

The Netherlands, Australia and the U.S. are the three countries that will be competing during this year's Honda Celebration of Light, organizers announced Wednesday.

The 26th annual fireworks festival attracts some 400,000 spectators to English Bay over three days in the summer. The countries put on 25-minute displays with accompanying music. Those with their eyes to the sky can tune-in via LG 104.3 FM.

Last year, Canada took the top prize.

"Some teams are extremely flowing and magical, others are bombastic," said acting mayor and former fireworks judge Heather Deal. "It's very tough competition because how do you compare apples and oranges?"

For Deal, an important component of a performance is the synchronization — the music and the pyrotechnics must go off at "just the right moments."

The U.S. team will be bringing the magic of Disney to their show, while Australia is returning to the Celebration of Light after 15 years. New to the game are The Netherlands, whose team has never competed in Canada.

Back again this year are The Keg and Inukshuk Lounges, the Sunsetter Bistro and the YVR Observation Deck, ticketed venues that promise some of the best views in the house (along with eats and cocktails, of course).

Show producer Tim Hopkins told Metro that organizers will be focussing on making the overall experience better, "expanding on what's been done right."

As the province's biggest public and free event, Celebration of Light contributes $37 million in tourism and hospitality spending each year, according to a media release. "It's a huge tourism boost. You have people coming from all over British Columbia. We have individuals across the country starting to book hotels," said Hopkins.

As for the entertainment, Loverboy will be headlining the Sunset Beach Festival. More Canadian musicians will be announced at a later date.

The Netherlands will perform on July 23, Australia will hit the barge on July 27 and the U.S. will follow suit on July 30.

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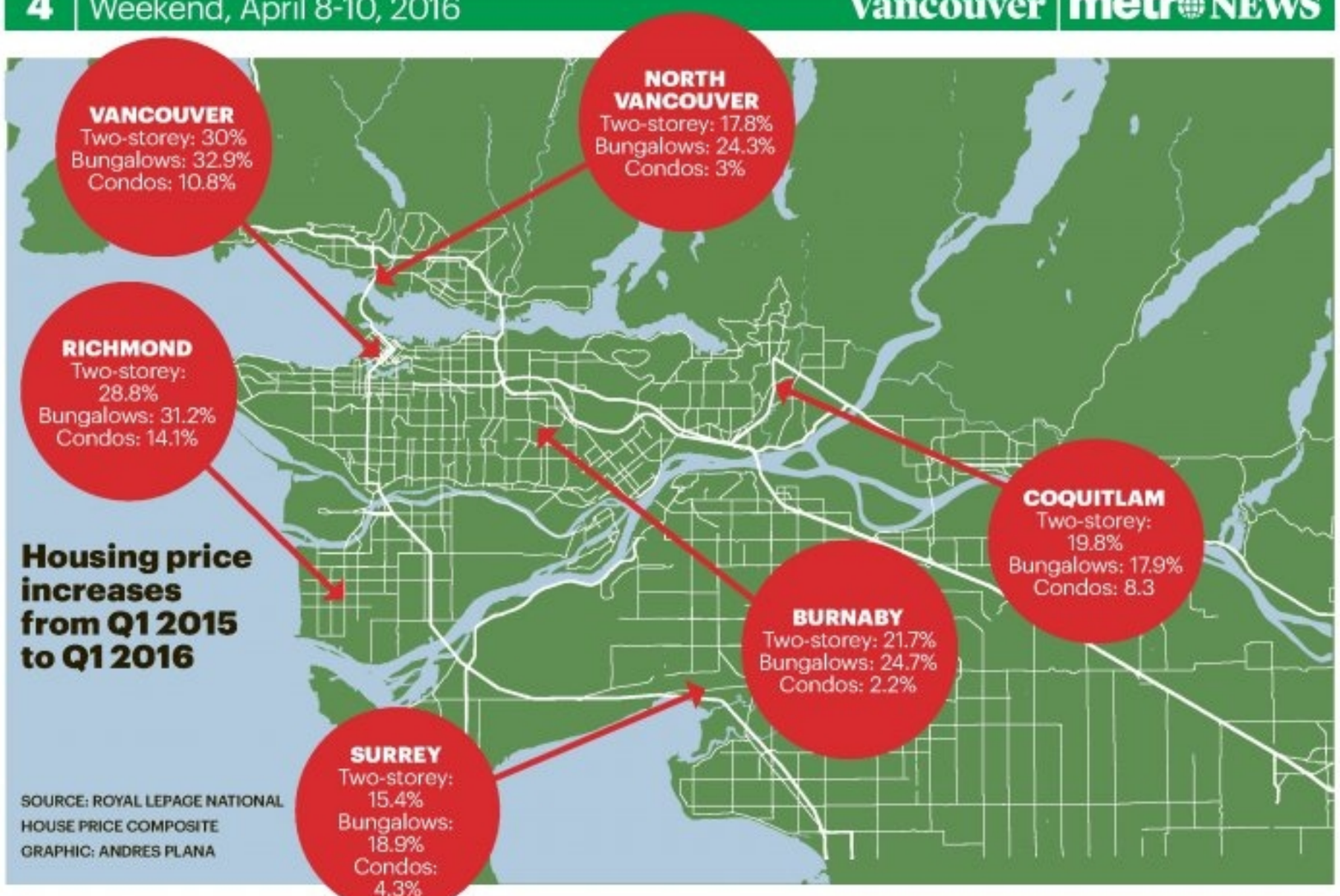

Metro Vancouver housing prices spike

REAL ESTATE

Burnaby and Tri-Cities are trending up, says realtor

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

Metro Vancouver's real-estate market is already off to the races in 2016, according to an annual Royal LePage report.

The realty firm's national house-price composite shows the average price of properties on the market are up 21.6 per cent in the first quarter of 2016, compared to Q1 2015.

In comparison, prices in Toronto are up 9.3 per cent and prices in Montreal are up 3.3 per cent.

Nationally, prices are up 9.2 per cent.

Back in Metro Vancouver, the price of two-storey homes are up 23.6 per cent, bungalows are up 25.7 per cent and condominiums are up 9.5 per cent.

While much of the focus of Vancouver's affordability issues have been centred within City of Vancouver limits, realtor Adil Dinani said the numbers show house prices in the outlying municipalities are also quickly on the rise.

"The price increases are migrating east for sure," said Dinani.

"People want a certain type of house, so places like Burnaby and the Tri-Cities are really trending up. We're seeing people in Vancouver and West Vancouver leaving those cities and moving east."

Part of that is because listings are down 40 per cent this year, which has contributed to the biggest seller's market.

Meanwhile, Dinani says the Tri-Cities are in the midst of a housing surge ahead of the Evergreen Line, which will make commuting downtown much easier.

He also says the price increase correlates with municipalities moving to more pro-active community plans that embrace density and create more walkable neighbourhoods.

As for predicting the future of the region's red-hot market, Dinani said realtors are in the same boat as everyone else.

"That's a crystal ball question," he said.

"It's very challenging to predict what is going to happen. No one really has the answer. It's really difficult for buyers and as agents."

CONDO STUDY

Data on foreign ownerships 'scarce'

Foreign-ownership rates in new Vancouver condominiums are as high as six per cent, according to a new Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) study.

Due to growing interest in learning more about possible impacts foreign ownership is having on real-estate markets in cities such as Vancouver and Toronto, CMHC says it has made getting more information on foreign investment a top priority.

Despite estimates and studies done by other organizations, CMHC's report said actual "available factual information remains scarce."

One of the few reliable indicators is its annual Condominium Vacancy Survey, which began collecting data on foreign ownership in 2014.

At latest count, the report says the share of foreign ownership in condominium apartments in Vancouver was 3.5 per cent last year.

The number is similar to the 3.3 per cent seen in Toronto, but well above other major Canadian cities such as Montreal (1.3 per cent) and Calgary (1.1 per cent).

The report found that the age of the development plays a major factor. In Vancouver buildings constructed since 2010, the share of foreign owners rises to about six per cent.

The survey results are for the entire Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area, which includes the City of Vancouver and outlying Lower Mainland municipalities.

Numbers for the City of Vancouver proper, where the foreign ownership debate is fiercest, were not included in the report.

CMHC does, however, have more detailed numbers for Toronto. It says that foreign-ownership rates jump to about 10 per cent in newer condo stock within the downtown Toronto centre.

The national housing agency expects to report more on foreign ownership in the future.

The Condominium Vacancy Survey, it says, is just "one meaningful first step" toward filling the data gap on the issue.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Models will be dolled up in Bollywood and South Asian fashion at the Vancouver Convention Centre this weekend. CONTRIBUTED

Traditions on display

FASHION

South Asian culture and clothing to be celebrated

Tereza Verenca
Metro | Vancouver

Brides on the hunt for that perfect South Asian gown will have to look no further than Raasleela Bridal Fashion Week at the Vancouver Convention Centre today until Sunday.

Surrey-based designers Jai Singh and Parvesh Kumar — owners of Raasleela by Parvesh Jai — are the brains behind the inaugural, three-day event.

"Over the last few decades, Vancouver has emerged as one of the biggest wedding shopping destinations for South Asian fashion in North America," Singh told Metro. "We have clients from New York, LA. … We have so many cross-cultural marriages. You see Indian and Chinese, Indian and Philippines."

He said Vancouver is also becoming a popular wedding destination.

The bridal show will feature the work of 20 internationally recognized South Asian designers, like Satya Paul, Rohit Verma, Joy Mitra, Pammi Singh and Mayyur Girotra. Many of them, Singh noted, have never showed their garments to a Vancouver crowd.

The target audience is the western South Asian bride — the one who grew up with "Western sensibilities," but seeks that traditional, Indian look. Attendees can expect to see dresses of all kinds on the cat walk, he said.

"Lots of bright colours, embroideries, textures, lots of detailing. We have wine and snacks, so they can drink and enjoy fashion and food."

Each designer will have a booth, allowing passersby to ask questions, get fitted or try something on. Singh said on average, it can take up to three months and 15 people to create a South Asian bridal gown from scratch.

There will also be over $100,000 in giveaways during Bridal Fashion Week, as well as cake vendors, jewellery designers, wedding planners and anything else wedding-related.

"It's a full package," Singh added.

IN BRIEF

Mission man pleads guilty

Walter Ramsey, a 43-year-old man from Mission, has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and two counts of attempted murder.

Ramsey was facing charges of first-degree murder and arson in the death of a woman after her trailer home in the Fraser Valley community went up in flames at 3 a.m. on April 17, 2015. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Weed seed activist busted by police in Vancouver

A Vancouver marijuana activist has been charged following a rally and pot seed give-away at a Calgary hotel. Dana Larsen was in the city on Wednesday with his "Overgrow Canada" campaign in which he aims to hand out one million pot seeds to be planted in public places.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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¼ cup (60 mL) dry roasted almonds, chopped

¼ cup (60 mL) dried cherries

Directions

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together yogurt and Nutella until well combined.

2. Portion into four parfait cups or bowls and top with granola, almonds and dried cherries. Serve.

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Bella Gelateria's maestro gelatiere James Coleridge sits on the seawall with his latest creation, a water-buffalo milk gelato. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Water buffalo milk gelato hits the city

FOOD

Alternative to cow dairy now on offer at Bella Gelateria

Tereza Verenca
For Metro | Vancouver

A Vancouver gelatiere is hoping customers don't have a cow over his new buffalo milk gelato.

James Coleridge, owner of Bella Gelateria, has launched Gelato di Bufala. Made out of water-buffalo milk, the frozen treat is silky and buttery to the taste. It's also much healthier than the traditional alternative.

"There's no eggs, no cream and no refined white sugar," said Coleridge, adding it contains more iron, calcium, protein and vitamin A than its cousin and is even consumable by those who are lactose intolerant.

As far as Coleridge knows, Bella Gelateria is the only restaurant of its kind in all of Canada to offer this Italian dessert. It's been previously made in Toronto and Calgary but had limited success and is not currently being produced, the entrepreneur said.

The idea for the recipe came to the award-winning gelatiere after he did extensive research on the benefits of buffalo milk. The bufala mozzarella was already being used in his Napoletano pizza, so he was curious to see what the porcelain-white milk would do to gelato (cows produce a yellow pigment in their diet, buffalos don't).

"When I drank the milk, I was absolutely thrilled. I went, "Hmm, that's pretty good!"

Coleridge then got in touch with an Abbotsford dairy farmer, who owns a herd of the water buffalos. Before he knew it, 100 litres of milk were on his door step.

"I tested it with so many people, just asking them for a reaction and everybody said, 'I can't believe how smooth it is, I can't believe how silky it is. That's water buffalo milk?'"

Coleridge said water buffalo milk is about 65 per cent more expensive than the regular stuff. That's because a water buffalo produces about seven litres of milk daily compared to a dairy cow that can produce more than 23 litres.

"It's the most expensive thing on our menu, but we don't charge a premium for it. The reason being it's such a unique product for giving people an alternative to cow's milk," he explained.

Bella Gelateria is offering four flavours at the moment — lemon, chocolate, fior di Latte (flower of milk) and white coffee. Prices range from $5.50 for a single scoop, $6.75 for two and $8 for three. "We think Vancouver's going to love it," said Coleridge.

ENVIRONMENT

British Columbia mayors push for higher carbon tax

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

A group of eight B.C. mayors is pushing the province to increase the carbon tax by up to $15 per tonne annually in order to meet climate-change goals.

The B.C. Mayors Climate Leadership Council, which includes politicians from Metro Vancouver, Northern B.C., the interior and Vancouver Island, submitted recommendations asking the province to reinstate annual increases in the carbon tax between $6 and $15 per tonne and put some of the cash toward transit expansion. The suggestions respond to the B.C. Liberal government's consultation into how the province can become a leader in action on climate change.

District of North Vancouver Mayor Richard Walton said Thursday the goal is to gradually and predictably increase the tax to control emissions.

"It's not hit people with a hammer, it's to get back to where we were," Walton said, adding he believes the province will respond positively to the suggestion.

Regardless of where the money goes — most mayors believe it should fund public transportation — Walton said it is important to put a price on carbon to fight global warming. "Right now the consequence is bad air and more congestion. Unless you put a price on it, people won't change," he said.

But mayors across B.C. are not unanimous in their support for a higher carbon tax. On Thursday, a coalition of Northeastern B.C. municipalities filed a submission urging the province to continue its freeze on the $30 per tonne carbon tax.

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A group of young volunteers hunts for garbage during a Surf Rider organized cleanup of South Chesterman beach in Tofino, March 2015. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Campaign bids farewell to straws

ENVIRONMENT

Ambitious plan to cut plastic waste starts small

Some businesses in an ocean-side town on Vancouver Island are taking their first swing against plastic waste and eliminating plastic drinking straws.

Businesses in the tourist destination of Tofino have been asked to stop routinely handing out straws and to provide biodegradable options on request, said Michelle Hall, co-chair of a non-profit group that's spearheading the campaign.

"They're really quite useless, we can say goodbye to straws," said Hall, who is with the Pacific Rim chapter of the Surfrider Foundation.

"I just wanted to start with something that was way more achievable."

All but eight of 30 businesses have agreed to go straw-free as part of the "Straws Suck" campaign launched in early March, said Hall. She's hoping the holdouts will get on board by Earth Day on April 22.

Straws are one of the top ten pieces of trash gathered in beach cleanups around the world, the foundation says.

But single-use plastics, which include straws, accumulate in much greater volumes. The foundation says at least 20 million tonnes of plastic litter enters the ocean every year, disintegrating as a result of sand and sun.

About 88 per cent of debris collected during the last cleanup on Tofino's South Chesterman beach was plastic, Hall added.

She said people don't recognize the impact of straws on beaches or in landfills.

"People don't have that much of a connection to where that straw goes after they've drank their drink and left it for their server to collect," she said. "The straw goes into the bin."

20 million

The amount, in tonnes, of plastic litter that enters the ocean every year, according to the Surfrider Foundation.

The Long Beach Lodge Resort, which is popular with surfers, has stopped its practice of using 12,000 straws each year.

"It's one of those things where you don't know what you don't know," said the resort's executive chef, Ian Riddick. "We were serving straws and plastic picks and doing what we were doing for decades."

Riddick said the decision was a "no-brainer," noting it's expensive and uses energy to transport straws to the resort by truck with other products.

"Our guests really do get it," he said. "It was really simple. And change isn't always simple in business."

The resort will offer corn starch straws to diners on request, while other biodegradable options available across Tofino are made from paper and bamboo.

The Tofino Chamber of Commerce is helping the campaign to bulk purchase paper alternatives for businesses that need a hand, Hall said.

Several owners were concerned about the expense and sourcing of biodegradable options, she said.

People in the town of 1,800 launch into conversations about reducing plastic waste when they notice the straws are gone, Hall said. She expects more positive feedback when the town swells to 22,000 visitors daily during its high-season in the summer.

The next targets in the campaign against single-use plastics are plastic bags, and eventually plastic water bottles and plastic coffee cups, Hall said.

"We invited people to get involved ... and the reaction has been awesome," she said. "We know the town is ready."

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Coaster in ski resort plan

WHISTLER BLACKCOMB

Waterslides, surf simulator part of $345M proposal

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

If skiing down the slopes at Whistler Blackcomb isn't enough to give visitors a thrill, they'll soon have the option of riding a roller-coaster or a waterslide.

Whistler Blackcomb will invest $345 million to develop new infrastructure at the prestigious ski resort, officials announced this week on the heels of an amazing season due to high snowfall and a low Canadian dollar attracting U.S. tourists.

The development will include an all-season water park on the upper base of Blackcomb Mountain called "Watershed," a gravity-based mountain coaster, an outdoor tree rope course, snowmobiles for children and a sightseeing suspension bridge.

The first phase will cost up to $100 million and will include the 163,000-square-foot water park, which will also feature a deep-water surf simulator, cliff jumping, rock climbing, a wave pool and bowling.

But outdoor enthusiasts who prefer more traditional activities such as snowboarding and skiing won't be forgotten in the planned spending spree.

Whistler will replace the Magic Chair with a new high-speed chairlift, build new snow school learning zones, enable night skiing and improve its snowmaking.

Of course, all of these dreams require consultation and approval from the municipality, the province and the Squamish and the Lil'Wat First Nations. Whistler hopes to develop a partnership with the First Nations, according to a statement.

"This is a very exciting growth initiative that, we expect, will increase year-round visitation to Whistler, insulate our resort from variable weather conditions and strengthen Whistler's position as one of the premier mountain resort destinations in the world," Whistler CEO Dave Brownlie said in the statement.

A rendering of the gravity-based mountain coaster planned for Whistler Blackcomb. CONTRIBUTED

CRIME

Witness sought in Surrey stabbing

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

Surrey RCMP are asking for the public's help after a stabbing early Thursday morning sent a man to hospital.

Police received multiple 911 calls at 4:20 a.m. reporting that a man had been injured in the area of 103rd Avenue and 128th Street.

Officers found a man suffering from multiple stab wounds to his upper body.

He was rushed to hospital, where he remained Thursday night in serious conditions.

Police patrolling the vicinity were able to track down a male suspect and make an arrest.

The investigation is ongoing, but RCMP are asking for any witnesses who may have seen the incident or know what happened immediately before to contact police.

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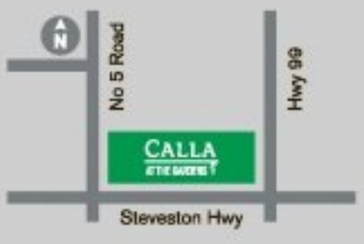

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VANCOUVERING

with icons by **Danielle Vallée** from the noun project

Workouts fit for a nightclub

Fitness raves rendering local workout fiends ecstatic

HEALTHY OBSESSION

NO CHILL ZONE

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

"Remember, I bring the moves and you bring the intensity."

That's the message from Francarlos Leon as he stands on a stage before a dark room of about 50 people before the lights go down and a live DJ starts spinning a Justin Bieber remix.

At first glance, the dark room could be any Granville Street nightclub on a Saturday night. But instead of vodka Red Bulls, those are water bottles and kale smoothies in their hands. Skin-tight sequined dresses have been replaced with head-to-toe Lululemon.

It's also 6 p.m. on a Tuesday.

This is a fitness rave — one of the new workout trends that have sprung up in nightclubs and event venues across Vancouver. From Wake 'n Shake, a pre-work yoga and dance party that took place last summer and earlier this year, to Be Live Fitness, which organizes regular events in local nightclubs, more and more fitness instructors are taking their routines to the dance floor.

People often feel they have to choose between fitting in exercise or a night out, but fitness raves let them do both, says Francarlos Leon, fitness instructor and founder of Be Live Fitness.

"This is kind of a fun, social night," he says. "You go work out, meet like-minded people and by 8:30 you're home. The next day, you're motivated, ready to go and you feel good."

Leon wanted to bring fitness raves to Vancouver last year after seeing similar events in New York and San Francisco. But planning a sober event at a nightclub wasn't without its challenges.

He said he had trouble finding a club owner willing to rent him the space, since he wouldn't be selling liquor. "They were like, 'The money for us is in the bar sales,'" he recalled.

But, because he hosts the events on weekday evenings, when most nightclubs are closed anyway, Leon was eventually able to make a deal.

Since then, he has hosted a handful of sold-out fitness raves with great fanfare.

For some people who feel they've outgrown the club scene, the classes let them still experience the live music and bright lights, but without a hangover the next day. Others rave about the events offering a break from the monotony of their usual gym, yoga and running routine, said Leon.

"The visuals, the lights and the music just take the class to another level," he said. "In studios, where you're just facing a mirror and looking at each other, your senses are not really being stimulated."

It's not surprising that the $25 tickets to Leon's fitness raves always sell out.

The Venezuelan instructor, who previously worked as a professional chef, has built a following in Vancouver for his intense classes, which combine plyometric exercises with cardio, dance and sometimes weights.

He said he believes that the encouraging affirmations he yells during especially challenging moves — "Fitter, stronger, happier and sexier," "Yes, you can!" and "It's you against you" — are what appeal to people.

"They enjoy that mindset and that motivation," he said. "Sometimes they come feeling down because of the weather or their job, but they always leave the class feeling a little bit uplifted and believing that tomorrow is going to be a better day."

Francarlos Leon, fitness instructor and founder of Be Live Fitness, leads a "fitness rave" in downtown Vancouver. CONTRIBUTED

> **The visuals, the lights and the music just take the class to another level.** Francarlos Leon

FOOD NOTES

HEADBANGIN' HOT SAUCE WILL FIRE YOU UP

Erin Ireland
Metro | Vancouver

Jonny Hetherington is the latest must-try hot-sauce label to be found on shelves at select local grocery stores. If you're a fan of heavy metal music, you might recognize the name. Hetherington is the lead singer of renowned Canadian rock band Art of Dying, who just released their fourth album, Rise Up.

An extra jolt for your avocado toast, as if it wasn't already perfect. ERIN IRELAND/FOR METRO

So, why hot sauce on top of the successful music adding that it's difficult to find hot sauces without "additives and junk in them." His spicy condiments are all natural and contain capsaicin (an active component of chili peppers), an ingredient he says relieves pain and is a known cancer fighter.

Hetherington's hot sauce comes in three unique flavours: beet, peach and pineapple. Beet, with its earthy-sweet qualities, is Jonny's and my favourite..The colourful sauces look stunning, they will "wow" your taste buds, and they work beautifully with many foods including Jonny's recommendations of savoury breakfasts, pizza, burritos and tofu bowls.

Find Jonny Hetherington Hot Sauces at Choices Markets, Gourmet Warehouse and on his website. You can also meet Jonny in person on Sun. May 1st at Choices Markets Yaletown, where he'll be offering samples from 1-5 p.m.

jonnyhetherington.com

THINK BIG. LIVE LOCAL

Left: A chickadee on a hand at Beaver Lake in Stanley Park. **Right:** The heron rookery near the Park Board offices in Stanley Park. AMY LOGAN/FOR METRO

Hipster birding takes flight

VANCOUVER TRENDING

AN OLD HOBBY'S NEW FACE

Amy Logan
For Metro | Vancouver

A young, bearded jazz and rock drummer may not be the first image that springs to mind when one thinks of bird watching. But local musician Dan Gaucher is part a new generation of city-dwellers interested in learning more about birds.

Vancouver is a birder's paradise. The city's ready access to bird habitat, with green spaces like Queen Elizabeth Park and Stanley Park — not to mention farther-afield spots like Iona Jetty, Reifel Bird Sanctuary, Deer Lake and Maplewood Flats — gives any curious Vancouverite a chance to discover and observe hundreds of fascinating species.

Gaucher was introduced to birding at the tender age of five on a family hiking trip around the West Coast Trail. Mesmerized by his uncle's knowledge of birds, Gaucher was exposed to the excitement of "coming around a corner and seeing something new," he says.

After moving back to Vancouver from Toronto a few years ago, Gaucher and his wife returned to the woods that they'd longed during their time in Ontario. He began peering through binoculars, trying differentiate bird species. He quickly discovered it was a steep learning curve. Studying the field guides and reading the blogs only got him so far. "Really, the only way to learn is in the field. Once you've seen a bird 50 times, you start to 'know' a bird simply by its silhouette or mannerisms," he said.

For the daunted fledgling birder, Stanley Park is a great place to start. The Stanley Park Ecological Society's Heron Cam, for example, is a camera trained on one of the many nests in the park's Pacific Great Blue Heron rookery, carefully protected in the heart of the city. At Beaver Lake, birders can observe numerous species, and if they bring a bit of seed, birds readily alight on their hands. Lost Lagoon hosts an incredible number of various seasonal duck species, swans, Canada geese, and song birds.

The ecological society also hosts several birding workshops, including a week-long series during its annual Bird Week (May 7-14th). You can even download a Stanley Park bird checklist at stanleyparkecology.ca.

Much of birding's appeal lies in the amazing places the hobby takes its devotees.

"Birds always know where to hang out, so if you go to a spot that's known for good birding, then it will likely be a pretty beautiful place," Gaucher says, adding that Maplewood Flats is his favourite spot.

Having walked the trails at least 60 times in the last three years, he has gotten to know the local birds and their relation to the ecosystem, recognizing the way they "coexist with the changing of the seasons, the tides, the plants, and even the birders," he said.

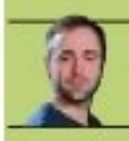
For him, this is what birding is truly about: giving him a better picture of "what an ecosystem really is, connecting in a new and nuanced way with your surroundings as they constantly shift and change." Just this past week, Gaucher spotted an orange warbler, and although he'd love to catch sight of something rare like a spotted owl, he's happy just getting to know the "local, regular birds."

A colourful wood duck at Lost Lagoon in Stanley Park.

Dan Gaucher investigates birds on Galiano Island.

SEA TO SKY

Rise and grind at Harbour Centre



Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

Ascension via glass elevator is one way to the Vancouver Lookout near the top of the city's iconic Harbour Centre tower. That's a comfortable climb of almost 554 feet and takes about 40 seconds.

Another way is to suck it up and take the stairs — all 633 of them. The Urban Grind, which ran every Tuesday in March, presented the latter option.

One by one, or in groups, participants make their way step by step to the observation deck where, on a clear day, they are witness to some of the most spectacular views in the city, from the North Shore Mountains, to the financial district of downtown and neighbouring Stanley Park, to historic Gastown and, beyond that, snow-capped Mount Baker off in the distance.

Call it ignorance on my part, but I was surprised — pleasantly — to see so many people complete the grind, driven to the top by the sights, which can be amazing if conditions are right.

For the end of your upward trek, there's a beer — a cold, refreshing beer to celebrate your accomplishment and accompany those great views.

The Urban Grind doesn't take long, compared to its more arduous mountain counterpart, the Grouse Grind. Less than 10 minutes up the steps if you're pace is brisk enough.

But there are challenges along the way, beyond the burn in your calves. One was something I never expected: misjudging steps, especially the higher I went.

Looking back, it was probably worth a laugh to see myself cautiously raise my leg and feel around with my foot to make sure I was planting on the proper step, particularly the final steps in a flight. (Visualize a less exaggerated Monty Python silly walk and certainly not done on purpose or for comedic relief.)

Oh, and did we mention there was beer at the top?

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Security on military bases to be reviewed

ARMED FORCES

Recent attack at recruitment centre spurs probe

The House of Commons defence committee will hold closed-door hearings on the state of security at Canadian military bases, The Canadian Press has learned.

Conservative MP James Bezan, the party's defence critic, proposed the idea, which was recently accepted by the all-party committee, although a date for the investigation has yet to be scheduled.

In the aftermath of a stabbing of two military members at a north Toronto recruiting facility last month, National Defence conceded that some elements of a full-scale security review at its installations were still ongoing 18 months after the terror attacks of October 2014.

Bezan says it's been clear since the 2014 deaths of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Cpl. Nathan Cirillo - attacks inspired by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - that members of the Canadian military need better protection.

He says that at some bases, visitors can drive on to the property without being challenged by security, and the incident last month in Toronto shows a need to improve protection at recruiting centres.

Ayanle Hassan Ali, 27, faces nine charges, including three counts of attempted murder, after two soldiers were attacked and injured by a man with a knife. Police said the man said afterward that Allah told him to do it.

Bezan says MPs want to hear from senior members of the military, including possibly the chief of the defence staff, about what measures have been taken, what resources they need and what can be done to improve.

The motion to conduct the committee investigation passed on March 22, the same day the federal budget was tabled.

A spokeswoman for the military said the review of so-called force protection was broken up into several smaller components and that measures, including some base security and safety awareness training have already been implemented.

"A review of some security and force protection directives are complete while others are ongoing," Cmdr. Nathalie Garcia said in an email.

"However, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) continuously assesses the threats posed against CAF members and implement appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of personnel."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vehicles enter Canadian Forces Base Halifax, in Halifax, in October 2014. The House of Commons defence committee will hold closed-door hearings on the state of security at Canadian military bases. THE CANADIAN PRESS/ANDREW VAUGHAN

> **The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) continuously assesses the threats posed against CAF members.**
> Cmdr. Nathalie Garcia

LEGISLATURE

Man charged with making death threats

A man has been charged after staff say someone phoned the legislature office of Alberta Environment Minister Shannon Phillips and threatened to shoot everyone over the carbon tax.

Michael Enright, an oil products salesman from Camrose, says he didn't make any threats and was simply calling to voice his frustration over the hurt currently being experienced in his industry.

> **This was nothing. This was me having a bad day.**
> Michael Enright

"This was nothing. This was me having a bad day," Enright said when contacted by The Canadian Press on Thursday. "I'm a very calm person. Everybody knows me as a guy who never gets upset."

Cheryl Sheppard of the Edmonton Police Service said Enright faces one Criminal Code charge of uttering threats.

The call happened a week ago, on March 31, in the middle of the afternoon.

"He was calling to express his anger over the carbon tax," a staffer in Phillips's office told police in a statement.

The staffer told police the caller, who refused to identify himself, referred to the minister as a man. When he was reminded Phillips was female, "he told me the NDP only hire people with boobs, not qualified people."

"He then said he was going to get his ammunition and gun and come here and shoot us all," the statement reads.

Sheppard said Enright was charged later that day with assistance from police in Camrose.

Enright said Thursday he has not been in court yet.

He denied making any threats.

"No, I didn't say that. I don't have a gun. I don't have ammunition. I didn't say that at all."

Enright said he was driving and listening to talk radio host Danielle Smith, former Opposition Wildrose leader in the legislature, when he called Phillips's office.

"I'm listening to Danielle Smith talking just one thing after another about — whatchamacallit — the economy and the coal. I've got friends who are losing their jobs, and I phoned in," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Senator sent to hospital

Sen. Jacques Demers remains in a Montreal hospital in what one colleague described as "serious but stable" condition after suffering a stroke.

Claude Carignan, Conservative leader in the Senate, said he spoke with an assistant to Demers and was told the 71-year-old, former NHL coach was conscious Thursday morning. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MP Maxime Bernier makes Tory leadership bid official

Quebec MP Maxime Bernier became the second official contender for the permanent leadership of the Conservative party Thursday, saying that while there may be more than a year to go until the winner is chosen, he's ready now. "It's time for our conservative movement to have a leader who speaks openly, with passion and conviction," Bernier said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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U.K. leader admits tax haven profits

PANAMA PAPERS

PM Cameron invested thousands offshore

After four days of equivocating, British Prime Minister David Cameron issued a bombshell admission Thursday: He profited from shares he owned in a secret offshore company established by his father.

Calls for his resignation followed swiftly after the confession, which was triggered by the ongoing Panama Papers investigation by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and more than 100 media partners, including the Toronto Star.

Cameron's offshore wealth is the latest in a string of political scandals set off this week by revelations contained in the unprecedented leak of 11.5 million confidential banking and corporate records.

Executives at two major European banks have resigned and the prime minister of Iceland has been forced from office; a FIFA ethics commissioner and the president of the Chilean branch of Transparency International have stepped aside after they were named as clients of the offshore law firm behind the leak.

For Cameron, who has publicly spoken of the need to crack down on offshore tax avoidance, it was an uncomfortable acknowledgment. He admitted he held shares in an offshore firm with his wife from 1997 until they were sold for 30,000 pounds ($55,000) in 2010, just before he became prime minister.

The firm, Blairmore Holdings, Inc., was set up by his father in the Bahamas in the early 1980s and never paid any taxes in the U.K. on its profits, according to a Guardian newspaper investigation.

> **Covered up and misled.**
> Labour MP John Mann on David Cameron's actions

"I paid income tax on the dividends," Cameron said. "I didn't pay capital gains tax. But it was subject to all the U.K. taxes in all the normal ways."

Cameron also said he received a 300,000-pound ($550,000) inheritance from his father when he died in 2010, and could not be sure that the money had not benefited from tax haven status as a portion of it was housed in the Channel Island of Jersey.

"I obviously can't point to every source of every bit of the money and Dad's not around for me to ask the questions now," he said.

It was the fifth explanation he had offered in the four days since his involvement in the Panama Papers was made public.

On Monday, Cameron's office issued a statement referring to his finances as "a private matter." On Tuesday, he said he holds "no shares, no offshore trusts, no offshore funds." On Wednesday, his spokesperson stated: "The prime minister, his wife and their children do not benefit from any offshore funds." Thursday morning, his office added that the family would not benefit from any offshore funds or trusts in future.

Each statement only added fuel to the public outcry calling for a full accounting of the prime minister's assets, something he agreed needs to be done.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ARGENTINA PROSECUTORS WANT PRESIDENT UNDER SCOPE Demonstrators protest against President Mauricio Macri outside the government in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Thursday. An Argentine prosecutor has asked for an investigation into President Macri's role in offshore companies, adding to the global fallout from a massive leak of documents from a Panama law firm. The signs held by the protesters read in Spanish from left, "They said they were a team.... It turned out they were an illicit association." "Let justice weigh them with the same scales." NATACHA PISARENKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BRUSSELS AIRPORT

Prosecutors seek info on 'man in a hat'

Belgian prosecutors launched a public appeal Thursday seeking any information on "the man in a hat" seen before the Brussels Airport suicide bombings that killed 16 people.

Belgian Federal Prosecutor Eric Van der Sypt said authorities were especially interested in any people who might have filmed or photographed him.

The suspect was seen at the airport with two suicide bombers before they died in the March 22 attacks.

A subsequent explosion at Brussels' Maelbeek subway station killed another 16 people the same morning.

Photos released by prosecutors showed the man, who was wearing a dark hat, leaving the airport on foot, walking to the nearby town of Zaventem and then into Brussels, where all traces of him were reportedly lost.

The suspect also wore a white jacket but discarded it at some point, prosecutors said.

The appeal for public assistance more than two weeks after the suicide bombings indicates that investigators are at a standstill.

The third suspect of the recent attack on Brussels airport is shown during his escape from the airport after the blasts.
BELGIAN FEDERAL POLICE VIA AP

Three bombers, two at the airport and one in the subway, also died in the attacks, which wounded 270 people and were claimed by Islamic State extremists.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Venezuela orders long weekends amid power crisis

Public employees in Venezuela will take long weekends for two months under the government's latest bid to ease a nationwide power crisis. President Nicolas Maduro announced late Wednesday that he would sign a decree giving state workers a Friday furlough for 60 days. Together with other measures, he hopes to reduce electricity consumption by at least 20 per cent.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Greek workers go on strike

Greek public sector workers walked off the job in a 24-hour strike Thursday.

The strike was launched to protest social security and pension reforms demanded as part of Greece's third international bailout. It caused massive disruptions across the country, leaving flights cancelled, schools closed and news broadcasts off the air.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oilpatch in record slump

ECONOMY

Industry sees biggest-ever 2-year decline in investment

Canada's oil and gas industry is on track to see its biggest two-year capital spending decline in its seven-decade history, according to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

Companies are expected to invest $31 billion in 2016, a 62 per cent drop from the 2014 record of $81 billion.

It's the biggest drop since CAPP and its predecessor organizations began keeping track in 1947 — the year of Alberta's first major oil discovery.

The U.S. benchmark oil price was above $100 US a barrel in mid-2014. Now, it's at about $37 US — below what most producers need to be profitable.

CAPP estimates 110,000 direct and indirect jobs have been lost in the downturn, which began in late 2014 and continued to deepen through to last February when crude fell below US$30 a barrel for a time.

A water intake pipe for oil sands operations north of Fort McMurray, Alta., in 2015. Capital spending in Canada's oil and gas industry has dropped by $50 US billion since 2014. IAN WILLMS/GETTY IMAGES

"It is a really tough time," CAPP president and CEO Tim McMillan said Wednesday.

"Almost no one is left untouched within their family circle and within their social circle."

Compounding the pain is the inability for Canadian oil and gas producers to reach markets outside of the United States, a major global petroleum player itself.

Efforts to build oil export pipelines and liquefied natural gas terminals have faced stiff environmental opposition and regulatory delays.

In a release, CAPP said building that infrastructure should be a "national priority" but did not specify what concrete actions it wants provincial and federal governments to take.

Moving forward with pipelines and LNG, he said, is "the first and most obvious place to put us on that level playing field."

> "We're not just battling global prices, we're battling global prices with a further discount.
> CAPP president Tim McMillan

Much of the debate around pipelines and LNG has focused on the broader climate impacts from fossil fuels.

Greenpeace campaigner Keith Stewart said CAPP is being "wilfully blind" to how the global push to combat climate change is transforming energy markets.

"Canada needs to take action so that we win in the new world of low-carbon, renewable energy, not prop up the fossil fuel industry," he said. "Oil companies have a choice: Transform themselves into clean energy providers, or go the way of the dinosaur." THE CANADIAN PRESS

INFRASTRUCTURE

Call for cash for rail, ports

Big investments in both rail and marine infrastructure will be required to accommodate an acceleration in commodities shipments, particularly oil, over the next decade, says the Conference Board of Canada.

In a report released Thursday, the agency said annual tonnage of commodities shipped by rail will grow more quickly than in the past, rising 30 per cent from 200 million tonnes in 2011 to 260 million tonnes by 2025.

The Conference Board said Canada's shifting trading patterns are putting additional pressure on the country's railways and ports to meet the growing demand for Canadian commodities. THE CANADIAN PRESS

$1.25B

The combined amount the Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Railway spent, on average, a year between 2005 and 2014 on rail infrastructure.

FOOD

Companies take aim at sugar overload, urge better labelling

Two Canadian business leaders want the country's food industry to use more transparent labels so Canadians know just how much sugar they're consuming.

Indigo's CEO and the former CEO of Lululemon are making sugar one of their main targets as they fight to change industry standards.

Sugar is the enemy, said Heather Reisman, CEO of Indigo Books and Music Inc. and executive producer of the 2014 documentary Fed Up, which takes on the sugar industry.

Lots of processed food contains high amounts of sugar, she said.

"Today, sugar is in everything — everything," she said during a presentation to the Toronto Region Board of Trade earlier this week. "It's in ketchup. It's in canned foods. It's in the bread we eat."

For her part, she's prohibited Indigo stores from selling chocolate treats at checkout counters to help hungry customers avoid making sugar-laden impulse purchases.

Canadians need to change the way they eat, Reisman said — and to succeed they need easier-to-understand food labels.

Currently, food packages list how many grams of sugar are contained in a single serving size (like half a cup).

"You have to be a chemist to understand how much sugar is in the product," she said.

Instead, Reisman is calling for something more "straightforward," like the number of teaspoons rather than grams.

The federal government pledged to revamp food labels in the October 2013 throne speech. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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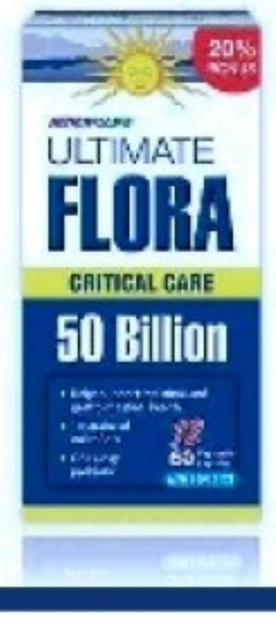

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metro VIEWS

Your essential daily news

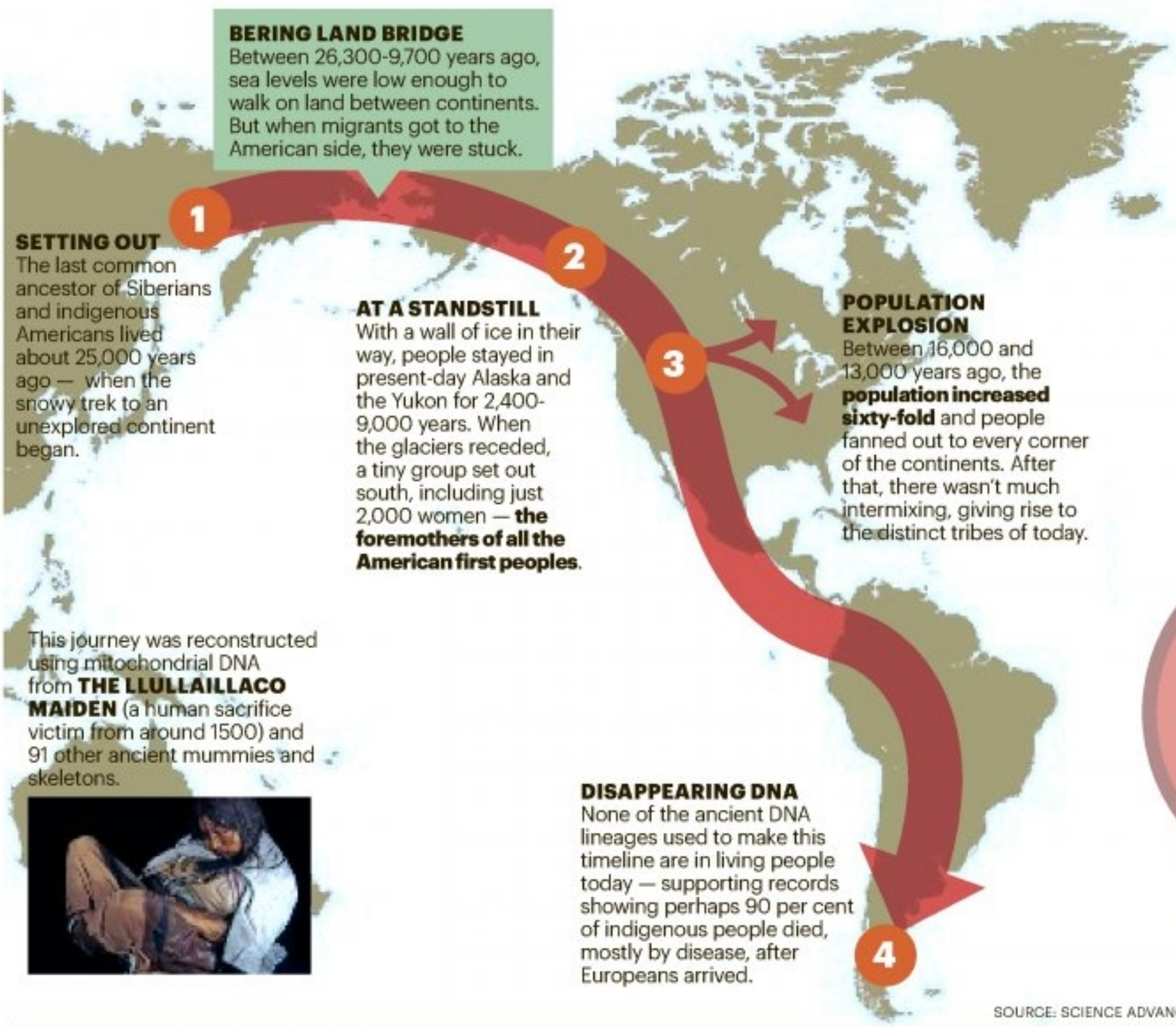
SCIENCE SAYS Weekend, April 8-10, 2016

Don't brush this off: There are 1,698 reports of injuries from people accidentally swallowing bristles from brushes used to clean BBQ grills.

DECODED Journey to the Americas

THEY ALMOST DIDN'T MAKE IT

How did a small band of Stone-Age hunters from Siberia sow the genetic seeds of hundreds of distinct ethnic groups — from the Mayans to the Mohawk — across two vast continents? New genetic research hints at **a video game-like quest** for survival.

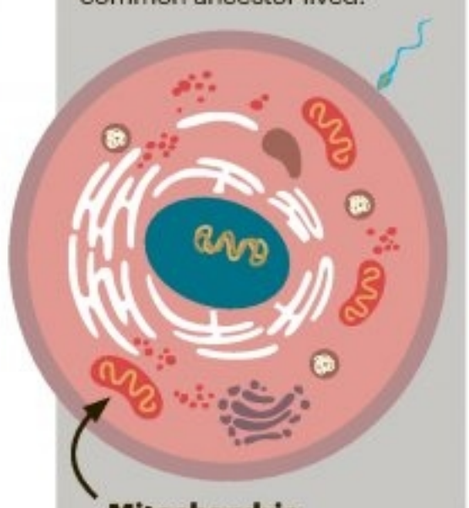


This journey was reconstructed using mitochondrial DNA from **THE LLULLAILLACO MAIDEN** (a human sacrifice victim from around 1500) and 91 other ancient mummies and skeletons.

Mitochondrial DNA: A molecular clock

• While your mom and dad both give you their DNA, only your mother also passes on all the other stuff in her egg cell — including mitochondria, which have their own DNA.

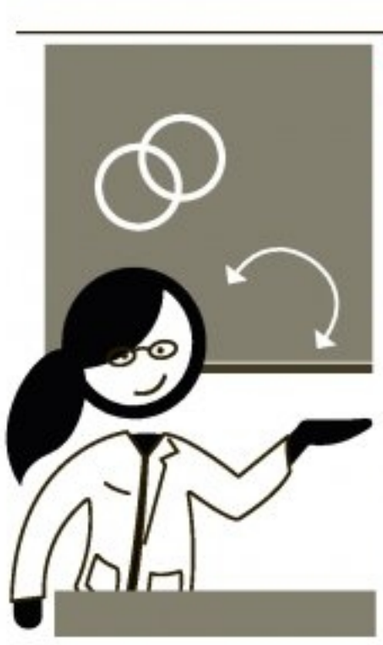
• Over time, very small changes (mutations) to mitochondrial DNA accumulate. Scientists can measure the differences in the mitochondrial DNA of ancient people and modern ones to estimate when their last common ancestor lived.



SOURCE: SCIENCE ADVANCES, 01 APR 2016; GRAPHIC: ANDRÉS PLANA/METRO

CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

Can a computer create life?



Scientists have built fake bacteria that can reproduce. If they're alive, what does "alive" even mean?
— Fred, Calgary

Oof. This is a tough one, Fred.

Some background: Last month, a team lead by Craig Venter of the Human Genome Project announced the creation of Syn 3.0, a man-made bacterium with 473 genes — the fewest in any living thing ever. We think this is close to the minimum DNA a cell needs to survive, reproduce and grow at a decent pace in a lab. Like the first synthetic cell, Syn 1.0, it reproduces on its own through cell division, just as real bacteria do.

This is exciting research. The authors still have no idea what about a third of Syn 3.0's genes do. Further studies might shed light on the earliest life and give us clues about the obscure parts of our own DNA.

Venter calls Syn the first species to have its parents be a computer. Freaky, right? It calls into question some of the fundamental things we believe about life.

"Life," the Encyclopaedia Britannica says, is "living matter that shows … responsiveness, growth, metabolism, energy transformation, and reproduction." So Syn 3.0 is alive.

But that definition doesn't capture the full meaning of the word. There's no hint in that list about why so many people believe life is sacred and mucking around with it is wrong.

"What is the meaning of life?" isn't a science question. It's not *falsifiable*: You can't make a hypothesis and design an experiment to prove yourself wrong. Ditto for "Which life forms are ethical to make synthetically?" and "Who should get access to these tools?" We have to answer those as a global community, through the political process. Outside the lab.

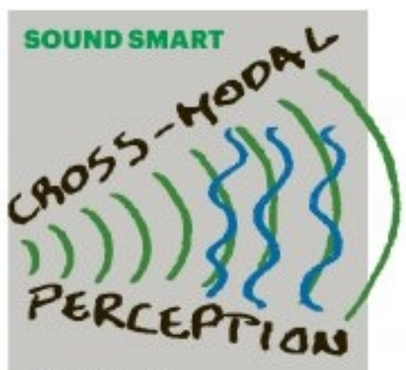
Science Question? Tweet @genna_buck

FINDINGS
Your week in science

DUNES ON MARS
The sand dunes on Mars have mysterious, massive ripples three metres deep, NASA's Curiosity rover shows. They're far bigger than what's found on Earth, perhaps because of the chemicals in the Martian atmosphere or its heavy, volcanic sands.

MALE BIRTH CONTROL
A long-acting, reversible contraceptive for men effectively keeps lab rabbits from breeding like rabbits, according to research in the journal of Basic and Clinical Andrology. Human trials of the product — a gel injected into the vas deferens — start in late 2016.

SOUND SMART



DEFINITION
Cross-modal perception is an experience that involves interaction between two or more senses. The fact that chocolate apparently tastes sweeter when people are listening to a high-pitched sound is an example.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE
"These fries taste off to me; maybe I'm experiencing **cross-modal perception** because of the obnoxious music in this bar."

PHILOSOPHER CAT
by Jason Logan

metro Your essential daily news

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metro WEEKEND
Your essential daily news
MOVIES MUSIC TELEVISION DIGITAL

In Demolition, Jake Gyllenhaal plays investment banker Davis Mitchell whose life is turned upside down when his wife is killed. CONTRIBUTED

Jake dancing with himself

DEMOLITION

Gyllenhaal nails another uncomfortable, maverick role

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Grief is no laughing matter, but with Demolition, Jake Gyllenhaal has made a whimsical movie about a man on the edge of falling into the abyss.

The film continues Gyllenhaal's quest to explore characters who aren't immediately likeable or understandable. No other mainstream actor puts himself or herself out there as consistently or successfully as Gyllenhaal. He takes chances, throwing himself at edgy portrayals of real people. Recently we've seen him as Nightcrawler's reptilian Lou Bloom, a slick-talking drifter who falls into the freelance news-gathering business, a man who seeks his doppelganger in Enemy and Southpaw's inarticulate brute with a heart of gold, World Middleweight Boxing Champion Billy Hope.

In Demolition, he plays investment banker Davis Mitchell. Wealthy and happy, his life is turned upside down when he and his wife Julia are bickering about banal home stuff and their car is broadsided and she is killed.

Instead of being plunged into grief, Davis becomes numb, impervious to the seven stages that usually accompany grave loss. However, his behaviour becomes increasingly strange. When he writes a letter to a vending-machine company demanding a refund, he finds an outlet for his feelings and a therapist of sorts in customer-service rep Karen Moreno, played by Naomi Watts. As his letters grow increasingly heartfelt and raw, Karen's sympathetic ear and later, her rebellious son, help Davis demolish his life so he can rebuild his world.

"It's a story about a guy who begins the movie in a conventional way and ends the movie through an unconventional journey," said Gyllenhaal at a press conference I hosted with him at TIFF last year, "feeling however (he wants and needs to) and not how society tells him to feel."

Here the 35-year-old actor delivers strong work, grounding the film's quirkiness in a character you may not understand but can empathize with. He does the heavy lifting, and his work humanizes this offbeat film.

When Davis spontaneously dances on the streets of New York or demolishes his marital home, it's outrageous but it is the sight of a man in pain refusing to face up to the fact that he wasn't a very good husband and will never be able to make amends to Julia. It's occasionally very funny, other times tragic.

The surreal dance scenes are surprising for the audience, but Gyllenhaal says they were a surprise to him as well.

"I always looked on the schedule for when the dancing was going to be," he said at the presser, revealing that director Jean Marc Vallee shot the scenes spontaneously.

"The first time I danced, we were on the train, and (Vallee) said, 'Okay, the train's pulling in,' and handed me an iPod, gave me an earphone and said, 'Are you ready to dance? Let's go.' By the end, I didn't want to stop dancing. I made like a whirling dervish."

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

The Boss	★★
Demolition	★★★★
Hardcore Henry	★★
I Saw the Light	★★

HOW RATING WORKS	
★★★★	SEE IT
★★★	WORTHWHILE
★★	UP TO YOU
★	SKIP IT

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Director X marks a new film phase

ACROSS THE LINE

Hotline Bling creator takes on a big-screen hockey story

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Director X (real name Julien Christian Lutz) has captured some of hip-hop's most iconic images on film. His Hotline Bling music video racked up almost 300 million online views, and he's directed promos for everyone from Rihanna and Kendrick Lamar to Iggy Azalea to Busta Rhymes, but now that he's made the leap to the movies don't expect a big screen musical from him.

"I've lived my life for almost twenty years with guys rapping or singing or singers who wish they were rappers," he says.

"I've swum in those waters enough. Now that I've got people talking I don't want them to talk about rapping and singing. Forgive me if that is not something I'm into right now.

"Maybe when I'm an old man doing a period piece about this time it might be interesting but I've always felt hip hop is like a movie right in front of your face. Chris Brown and Drake really got into a fight at a bar and threw vodka bottles at one another. Me fictionalizing a movie of that [isn't necessary], you're watching the movie unfold in front of your face, bullet time. For someone else, go on ahead, but there are other stories I'd like to tell and speak in my own voice."

Over the years X has been connected to other projects —there were rumours he would direct a vampire film called Razorwire — but says he chose Across the Line as his debut feature film because "it was actually about something."

"It's about where I'm from," he says. "It's about Canada but a deeper level of Canadian history and Canadian communities. It's not just a story about Toronto or a story we know, regardless of the city."

> **It's about Canada, but a deeper level of Canadian history and Canadian communities.**
> Director X

Across the Line is the debut feature film from acclaimed hip-hop director Julien Christian Lutz, a.k.a. Director X.
CONTRIBUTED

Inspired by true events, the film is a study of race in small-town Nova Scotia as seen from the perspective of a young National Hockey League prospect. When his chance at the big league is threatened by family problems and racial tension at his high school, he must overcome intolerance, cultural tension and the odds to fulfil his dream.

"It's a story that needed to be told," says the director, whose next film is a sequel to the movie Center Stage.

X's music video work is characterized by his own particular sense of style, something he had to put on the back burner while making Across the Line.

"I brought myself to it but at the same time there aren't any scenes that are just pure visual fun," he says. "There was no John Woo cool. When you're making movies you have a responsibility to respect the story over cool awesome shots that belong in blockbusters as opposed to a narrative. But at the same time it's not just turning on the lights and putting the camera on a tripod. It's finding a style that aids the story as opposed to just something that is cool stuff."

Across the Line's story has already connected with festival audiences. It won Best Atlantic Feature at the Atlantic Film Festival and earned kind reviews at the Beverly Hills and Boston International Film Festivals, which X thinks are driven by the realism on the screen. "It's inspired by life," he says, "and takes turns that only come out of life."

ABOUT THE FILM

Hockey's hidden history

- Nova Scotia native Floyd Kane wrote the film, which stars Stephan James (pictured left) as a prodigious and book-smart black hockey player being eyed by NHL scouts. Hurting his chances are his brother's nefarious activities as well as deep-rooted racial tensions in North Preston, N.S., which is billed as Canada's largest black community.
- Co-stars include Sarah Jeffery, Shamier Anderson, Lanette Ware, Steven Love and Jim Codrington.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sing for the girls, but stay for the refuge

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Pete Townshend, guitar god of The Who, says he learned to play guitar and started a band for two reasons:

A: His nose. B. To meet girls.

About his nose he said, "It was huge. It was the reason I played guitar." He also noted that bands (even band members with large noses) "always got the best girls."

"It is definitely one of the things that inspires lads to play music," agrees Sing Street star Ferdia Walsh-Peelo.

Ask most male musicians why they joined a band and 99 out of 100 will tell you it was for one very simple reason, to meet women. Art, money and fame are often far distant second place to the lure of the opposite sex.

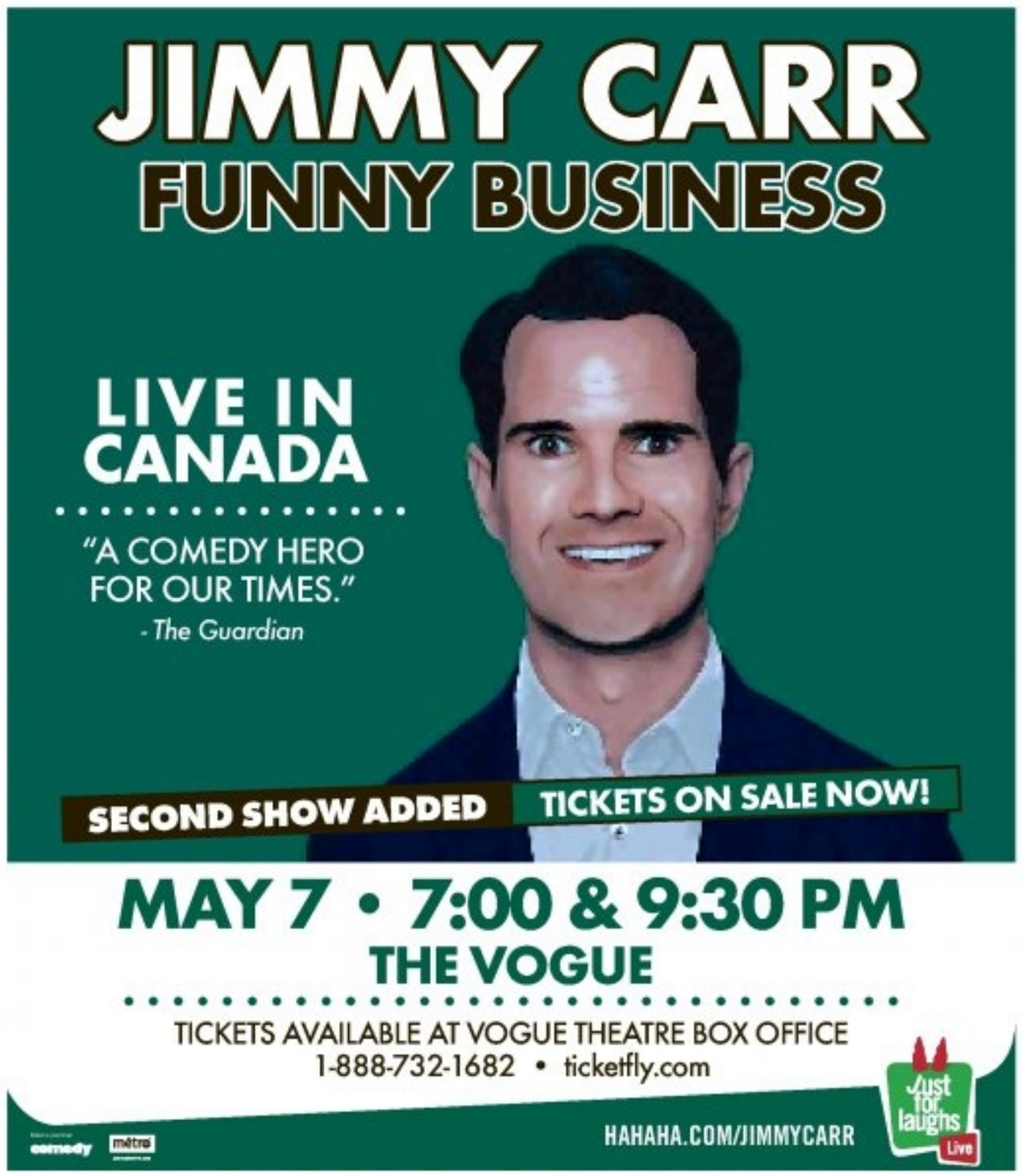
Such is the case with Conor (Walsh-Peelo) a 15-year-old school boy with a crush on Raphina (Lucy Boynton) in Sing Street, the new musical romance from Once director John Carney that plays like a spiritual cousin to The Commitments.

Ferdia Walsh-Peelo and Mark Mckenna star in Sing Street.
CONTRIBUTED

"I think that is the thing that gets Conor started and gets people started in pop music," he says. "Then you form the band and you find refuge in the music. It becomes more than just getting the girl. It's actually a way of coping when things are crap.

"I didn't have a great time in school and I went through all these similar kind of phases (as Conor). I remember seeing (the John Lennon biopic) Nowhere Boy and me and this other guy at school bought leather jackets, gelled our hair back and went into school. Bringing combs with us and doing our hair like in Grease. Looking like complete t—s running around town just doing mad stuff. It's all part of the process. Finding yourself and finding your voice."

Born and reared just 30 minutes outside Dublin in County Wicklow, in the film the young actor is the perfect picture of an '80s rock star, despite knowing next to nothing about the decade or the music when he signed on to play Conor.



metro TRAVEL

Your essential daily news

Much to tourism board's chagrin, I Took A Pill in Ibiza becomes Billboard Top 10 hit

From 1961 to 1989 a wall literally and emotionally divided Berlin. Today, parts — sometimes covered in '80s graffiti — can be seen at Bernauer Strasse and the Mauermuseum. PHOTOS LOREN CHRISTIE/FOR METRO

Traces of a city divided

Berlin is one of today's great art and cultural capitals. It also has a fascinating recent past, in part due to the wall that divided it for 28 years. **Loren Christie** spent 48 hours in this trailblazing city and reports back with a danke schön.

METRO CANADA

Berlin is a city with emotional intelligence; acutely aware of its place as ground zero for much of the troubled history of the 20th century while embracing its status as a political and cultural trailblazer in the 21st.

I recently spent a weekend in Berlin and despite my limited time and the city's size — 3.5 million people spread out over almost 900 square kilometres — I was able to get a sense of this grand city.

It sounds unimaginative, but the ubiquitous hop-on hop-off city tour is perfect for those on a schedule. The City Circle Tour includes a running commentary and has 18 stops including a couple around the Tiergarten, Berlin's massive inner city park and the former West Berlin downtown district of Charlottenburg.

The tour includes many references to the devastation of World War II and indeed the few pre-war buildings left standing are architectural stand-outs, but most of the tour is focused on life between 1961 and 1989 when the Berlin Wall literally and emotionally divided the city. Checkpoint Charlie was the best known border crossing between East and West.

Today there is a small guardhouse left standing where you can get a Checkpoint Charlie stamp in your passport and have a photo taken with some character actor guards.

Across the street, the Mauermuseum tells the history of the Wall through photos, videos and newspaper articles.

The Brandenburg Gate, the site of Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech in 1963, is likely Berlin's most recognized monument.

It's a worthy photo stop and a short walk to many of the city's historic buildings, including the German Reichstag.

A broad boulevard lined with shops, the Kurfürstendamm is considered the Champs-Élysées of Berlin. Skip the brand-name shops and go to the iconic KaDeWe department store. The sixth floor food stalls are foodie heaven and make a great lunch stop offering anything from traditional currywurst to fine French champagne and cheeses.

On my second day I squeezed in a visit to Bernauer Strasse where a large section of the wall still stands.

Sombre memorial plaques do an outstanding job explaining how brutal this period of history was for Berlin. It is best accessed via the Nordbahnhof subway station.

Don't miss the storyboards inside the station, which describe the ghost lines — West Berlin subway trains that passed through East Berlin.

The stations that once serviced the lines were shuttered to the East Berliners while anxious subway riders from the West trundled past the murky platforms lined with armed guards.

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metro SPORTS

Gonzaga sophomore Domantas Sabonis, son of Arvydas, has decided to skip the rest of his college career and declare for the NBA draft

Ex-Lions star returning to 'where it all began'

CFL

Cameron Wake speaks at amateur football event

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

Cameron Wake speaks to reporters in Vancouver on Thursday. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Those North Shore Mountains can make for quite a view on a beautiful day, and for Miami Dolphins defensive end Cameron Wake, they usher back fond memories of his time in Vancouver.

Wake snapped a photo looking out toward Stanley Park and Grouse Mountain, two iconic locations of the city. He captioned the image on Twitter with the words, "Where it all began..... #Vancouver #BCLions."

In just two seasons with B.C., Wake was the ultimate force on a Lions' defensive line that was so menacing.

"We were just going out there ... and we're going to cause havoc," said Wake on Thursday, prior to being the keynote speaker at the Orange Helmet Awards.

His first year in 2007, he had 16 quarterback sacks and was named the CFL's top rookie and most outstanding defensive player. The following season, he recorded 23 sacks.

After two magnificent years in the CFL, Wake took his talents to the NFL and the Dolphins, where he's earned four Pro Bowl nods.

But where it all began in Vancouver almost didn't begin at all.

The story goes that when the Lions invited Wake to a free agent tryout, held at a local school in Washington, D.C., the Penn State product actually showed up at the wrong school.

He missed the tryout as a result.

He thought that his opportunity was gone. It was the Lions' own club policy at the time not to sign players to training camp if they didn't attend these earlier camps.

Fortunately, the Leos decided this time to bend their own rules.

"Now here's a workout ... like Christmas morning. 'Oh yes, here we go. My chance is here.' I knew, because I was ready, I'm prepared, I'd been running, I'd been lifting, I'd been doing everything I know — I'm going to knock it out of the park," said Wake. "But then you get there and of all things ... I was at the wrong place?

"It went from Christmas morning to pure devastation."

But when the Lions brought him into the fold for training camp, that fuelled Wake to prove they were right.

"I was ... more fired up to say, 'Once I get to this training camp, there's no way that I'm leaving here without taking over,'" he said.

NHL

Flames scorch Canucks

Mikael Backlund scored his first career hat trick on Thursday night to lead the Calgary Flames to a 7-3 victory over the Vancouver Canucks.

Backlund, who has a career-high 21 goals, scored once on the power play, once at even strength and another shorthanded. It's been a red-hot second half of the season for the Swede, who only had five goals through his first 50 games.

THURSDAY In Calgary

7	3
FLAMES	CANUCKS

Dougie Hamilton, Joe Colborne, Deryk Engelland and Sam Bennett also scored for Calgary. The win moved the Flames into 25th place overall, two points up on the Canucks and one ahead of the Winnipeg Jets, who were playing the San Jose Sharks later Thursday.

Nikita Tryamkin with his first NHL goal, Bo Horvat and Emerson Etem scored for Vancouver. The Canucks have lost back-to-back games after a three-game winning streak. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Canada 10-1 after round robin at curling worlds

With an emphatic rout of the tournament host, Canada has sent notice that it's the team to beat heading into the playoffs at the men's world curling championship.

Kevin Koe's Calgary rink finished the round-robin in first place at 10-1, capping its run to the playoffs with a 7-2 win over Switzerland in Thursday's final draw.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

3-on-3 overtime format leading to less shootouts

The NHL is getting its wish with 3-on-3 overtime.

Far fewer games have been settled in the shootout this season following the introduction of the new overtime format. In fact, the NHL is on track to have 36 per cent fewer shootouts from last season, from 170 a year ago to something approaching 109 this year.

Overtime is settling games that go beyond regulation at about a 61 per cent clip this season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hawks rough up Raptors

Jeff Teague scored 23 points, Kyle Korver added 14 and the Atlanta Hawks held off the Toronto Raptors for a 95-87 win on Thursday.

The Hawks have won 16 of 21 and are a half-game ahead of Boston for the third spot in the East. Toronto dropped to 3-1/2 games behind first-place Cleveland.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jordan Spieth plays his second shot on the 11th hole at Augusta National on Thursday. ANDREW REDINGTON/GETTY IMAGES

Gamble lifts Spieth to lead

MASTERS

Defending champ shoots 6-under 66 in opening round

The shot was so risky that Jordan Spieth's caddie practically begged him not to try it Thursday in the Masters.

A great shot always beats a bad decision.

"That was one of the best shots I've ever hit in tournament competition given where it was," Spieth said of his escape from the pine trees on the 11th hole. "And I was laughing afterwards. That's how dumb the decision was, and pulled it off."

Spieth was coming off a birdie on the 10th that put him at 4 under and in the lead during a deceptively windy day at Augusta National. He blocked his tee shot to the right on the 11th hole and didn't have many options. His ball was on the pine straw. By going through the widest gaps in the trees, he figured the best he could have done was punch it out to 100 yards or more from the green. His caddie, Michael Greller, at one point motioned back to the fairway.

Spieth picked the tiny gap in the trees.

"I would like, if anyone gets a chance, to go look at that shot," said Spieth, who enters Friday with the lead after a bogey-free 6-under 66.

"Because Michael did everything in his power to call me off of hitting that shot. I had a 4-iron in my hands from about 210 (yards). And I had a gap where it had to rise over a tree, under another branch and split."

The shot came off perfectly, though there was one last moment where Spieth held his breath. The ball took a hard hop to the left when it reached the green, running fast toward the water. He bit his lip. He grit his teeth and said quietly, "Bite." It held up on the collar, and Spieth repeatedly slapped his thigh.

He had to make a seven-foot putt to escape with par.

Spieth's closest pursuers were Danny Lee and Shane Lowry, who both carded a 4-under 68. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OFF DAY

Top-ranked Jason Day dropped out of first-day contention after dumping his tee shot into the drink alongside the par-3 16th green. He limped back to the clubhouse at even-par.

MLB

Padres set futility record in 1st series

No major league baseball team has ever been as futile in its first three games as the San Diego Padres.

The Padres simply couldn't find home plate in their opening series against their biggest rivals, the Los Angeles Dodgers, becoming the first major-league team to be shut out in its first three games.

The Padres set the MLB mark with 27 straight scoreless innings to open a season. The old mark was 26 by the 1943 St. Louis Browns, according to STATS.

"There is still perspective here, not to be lost," rookie manager Andy Green said after the Padres' 7-0 loss Wednesday night. "We still do have 159 games left and we will score runs this year. And we will win series this year."

But this was bad.

The Padres were outscored 25-0 in the opening series against the Dodgers. Their 15-0 setback on Monday was the most lopsided opening day shutout in major league history. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yasiel Puig hit a two-run triple on Tuesday THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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RECIPE Veggie Pot Pie

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Who says vegetarian meals can't be comfort meals?

Ready in
Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 30 minutes

Ingredients
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1 1/2 lbs diced mushrooms
- 2 cups butternut squash, 1-inch cubes
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup light cream
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 x 397-gram package frozen puff pastry
- 1 egg

Directions

1. Allow puff pastry to thaw on the counter for one hour. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

2. In a large pot, melt butter over medium heat. Put onion, garlic, squash, mushrooms, celery, thyme and pepper in pot and sautée for 12 to 15 minutes. Sprinkle flour over vegetables, stir and cook for 2 minutes. Add stock, cream and frozen peas and simmer for a couple minutes.

2. Roll out your puff pastry to 1/4-inch thinness. Cut into squares that will fit your ramekins and flop over the edges.

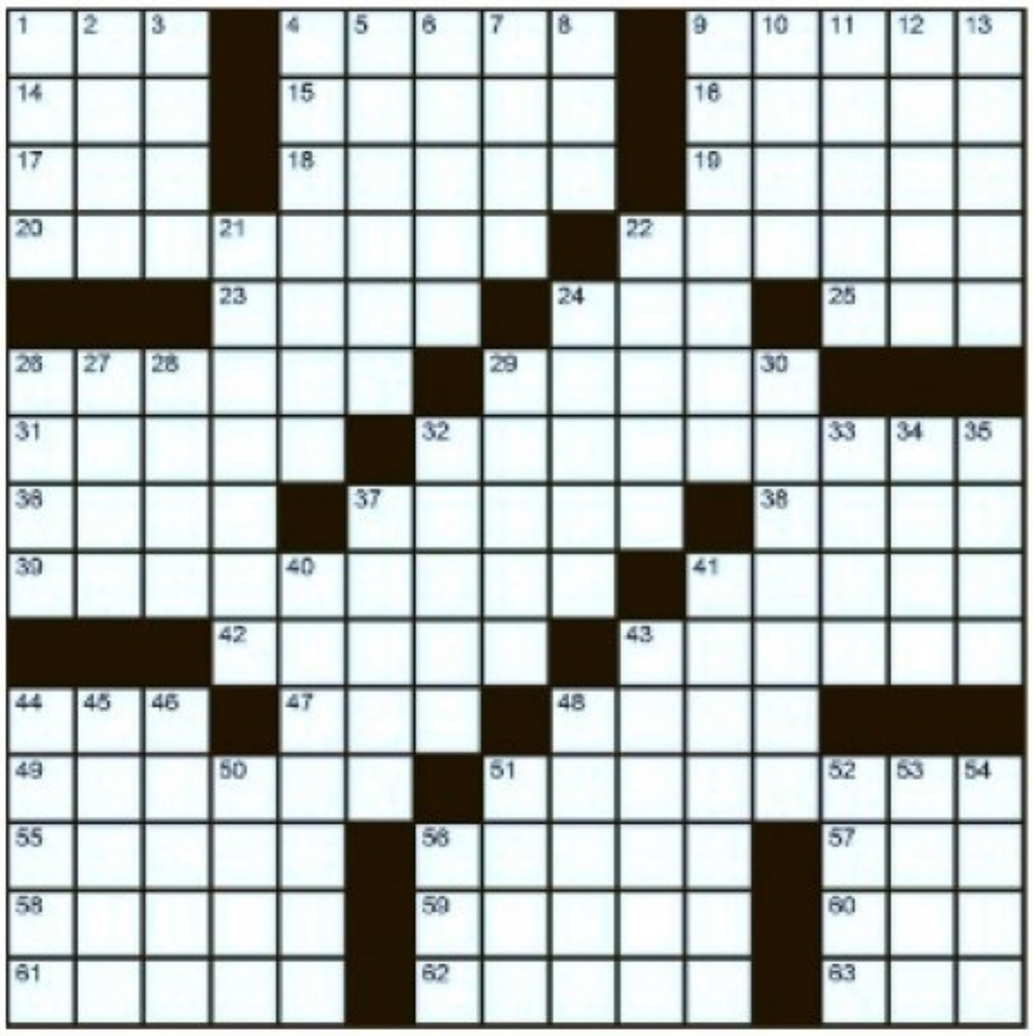
3. Ladle your vegetable mixture into your ramekins. Place a pastry lid over each. Quickly whisk an egg with a bit of water in a small bowl. Brush over top of each pie. Score slits into the pastry tops with a sharp knife.

4. Place the ramekins on a cookie sheet and cook for 25 to 30 minutes until the crusts are golden. Allow to cool before serving.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Vitality
4. "Blue __ Shoes"
9. Receded, as tidewater
14. Red Cross mission
15. Invest with funding
16. Thousand: French
17. Alkali
18. Type of skirt
19. __ donna
20. Pitching-a-tent part of a provincial park
22. Window type
23. Acorns grow on them
24. Uncooked
25. Open with might
26. Inconvenience
29. Loved ones, in Spanish = __ queridos
31. Spew
32. The Battle of __ __ (The great victory, and sacrifice, of the Canadian Corps of April 9th to April 12th, 1917)
36. Molokai feast
37. Seal
38. "__!" ...cried the cat
39. Enduring
41. Shredded Wheat cereal stuff
42. Deli side orders
43. One creating too much motion on the pinball machine
44. Seer's skill, shortly
47. 51s ...ancient Rome style
48. Kind of apple
49. Urban __
51. Hat of Mexico
55. Ben Stiller's actress mother Anne
56. Costless: 2 wds.
57. Kitchen floors cleaner
58. Ewoks' forest moon home
59. Brenda __, Reporter (Classic comic strip)
60. Suffix with 'Glycer'
61. Rose to one's feet
62. Least best
63. Amount of the Roman Numeral X

DOWN
1. Accountant's tool, briefly
2. "Hey there!": 2 wds.
3. 'Ditto' in a footnote
4. Sprinkled seasoning that's fancier than the usual: 2 wds.
5. Different
6. Modifies magazines
7. Exhausted
8. Meadows mother
9. Give a boost of strength and confidence
10. Whirring sound
11. Sight in the sky over a sports stadium
12. "__ Gantry" (1960)
13. Darling
21. Arboreal marsupials
22. Ms. Hannah
24. Send payment
26. Self-__ book
27. Flu symptom
28. Burn slightly in cooking
29. Road postings on posts
30. Resembling
32. Those of debating sides mostly conflict
33. Owed-money
34. Ex-VP Al
35. Something spouted
37. Garden gastropod
40. As per #32-Across... Walter Seymour __ (Toronto-born sculptor who designed the monument in France commemorating the Canadians who fought in The Great War)
41. Hazelnut
43. Lion __ (Circus performers)
44. Namesakes of Carlisle Cullen's wife in 'Twilight' movies
45. Like no-longer-in-the-account money
46. Museum attraction in Madrid
48. Succeed: 2 wds.
50. Suffix with 'Buck'
51. __ __ speak
52. Give off
53. Cycled
54. Sign on the store's door
56. Li'l Australian state

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
This is an excellent day for business and commerce. If shopping, you will appreciate what you buy. Trust your money-making ideas.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Today the Moon is in your sign, dancing with lucky, moneybags Jupiter. It's a great day to plan a vacation or a social event. Enjoy playful times with children.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
This is a feel-good day, and you have a warm feeling in your tummy. Enjoy all your encounters with others, especially family and friends. Invite the gang over for a barbecue!

Cancer June 22 - July 23
This is a wonderful day to schmooze with friends and members of groups. You are high-viz now, and people easily admire you. Make the most of this!

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
People in power (bosses, parents and teachers) are impressed with you today. For some reason, personal details about your private life are made public. Oh well.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Do something to shake it up a bit, because you want to broaden your horizons today. Go someplace you've never been before. Travel if you can.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
This is a good day to discuss touchy subjects about inheritances, taxes and debt. People are in a good mood and inclined to agree. Quite likely, you will benefit.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Relations with partners and close friends are smooth and friendly today. This is also a good day to deal with members of the general public.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Co-workers are supportive today. Some of you will enjoy work-related travel. You can learn something new on the job that expands your experience of the world.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
This is a party day for your sign! Make plans to enjoy fun diversions with others. Sports events, playful times with children and romantic liaisons will be fun and thrilling.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Real-estate deals will be excellent today. This is also a good day to do anything to improve your home or your relationship with family members.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Writers, editors, teachers and actors are favored today, because your communication skills are hot. It's easy to be in a positive frame of mind, because you're happy.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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	3		9		1		6	
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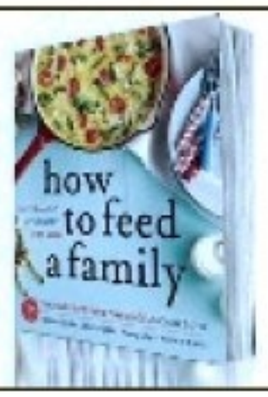

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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2	1	3	5	6	8	7	9	4
6	5	4	9	3	7	1	2	8
9	7	8	1	2	4	6	5	3
4	8	5	6	1	9	3	7	2
3	9	1	7	4	2	8	6	5
7	2	6	3	8	5	4	1	9
1	3	2	4	9	6	5	8	7
8	6	7	2	5	3	9	4	1
5	4	9	8	7	1	2	3	6

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